COUNTER NARCO-TERRORISM PROGRAM BUILDING FORCE CAPACITY OF GUATEMALAN KAIBILES ASSISTED BY THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

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Drug traffic, terrorism, high levels of corruption and more importantly border porosity, constitute the most prominent issues that Guatemala faces regarding security and stability. These issues are significant not only because they affect the country but also the Central American region, and ultimately the United States. Due to its geographical, and multiple international borders, including access to both Atlantic and Pacific littorals, Guatemala serves the opportunity to transnational criminal organizations across the Western Hemisphere, to continue expanding, dominating key terrain, therefore achieving freedom of movement causing further instability throughout the region. Because of that reason, United States has the Counter-Narco Terrorism program (CNT), in this case, to assist Guatemala in the matters of countering crime related to the illicit traffic of drugs, and terrorist activities. Furthermore, this program enable efforts within Guatemala to maintain security, stability, and lasting peace in the region.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

COUNTER NARCO-TERRORISM PROGRAM BUILDING FORCE CAPACITY OF GUATEMALAN KAIBILES ASSISTED BY THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES, by CW2 Eduardo J. Meneses, 76 pages.

Drug traffic, terrorism, high levels of corruption and more importantly border porosity, constitute the most prominent issues that Guatemala faces regarding security and stability. These issues are significant not only because they affect the country but also the Central American region, and ultimately the United States. Due to its geographical, and multiple international borders, including access to both Atlantic and Pacific littorals, Guatemala serves the opportunity to transnational criminal organizations across the Western Hemisphere, to continue expanding, dominating key terrain, therefore achieving freedom of movement causing further instability throughout the region. Because of that reason, United States has the Counter-Narco Terrorism program (CNT), in this case, to assist Guatemala in the matters of countering crime related to the illicit traffic of drugs, and terrorist activities. Furthermore, this program enable efforts within Guatemala to maintain security, stability, and lasting peace in the region.

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ACRONYMS

BPC	Building Partner Capacity
CARSI	Central America Regional Security Initiative
CIACS	Illegal Clandestine Security Apparatuses (Cuerpos Ilegales y Aparatos Clandestinos de Seguridad)
CNT	Counter Narco Terrorism
DoD	Department of Defense
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organizations
GEIR	Rescue and Interdiction Specialized Group (Grupo Especializado de Interdicción y Rescate)
GHRC	Guatemalan Human Rights Commission
IATF	Interagency Task Force
MOP	Measure of Performance
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
USSOF	U.S. Special Operations Forces
WOLA	Washington Office on Latin America

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> The United States has an obligation to work to reduce the demand for drugs and, at the same time, work to interdict the supply of narcotics…There's a lot we can do, but part of it is to help exercise control over all territories where these activities take place at; is to strengthen the rule of law, and to expand economic opportunity for the citizens. And we want to help.
>
> — President George W. Bush

> Latin American drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) control various aspects of the supplying illicit substances chain and vary regarding capabilities, organizational structures, and levels of associated violence. Some of the more sophisticated groups possess extensive paramilitary and counterintelligence capabilities that allow them to rival government security forces and operate with relative impunity through underground networks of corrupt officials in the major offices.
>
> — R41215 Congressional Research Service

Problem Statement

In order to modernize and substantially transform the Guatemalan Army, there has been a continual focus on reducing personnel. The intent of the government is to implement a reduced force model and reduce troop strength from 23,000 soldiers to 13,500 troops. Since 2004, efforts to lessen the numbers of personnel in the military sector are a direct result of the signing of the peace accords in December of 1996.[1] Due to this reduction in personnel, border protection in Guatemala is not optimal. In addition to the already existing border porosity, reduced border protection is unable to restrict DTOs'

[1] Luisa Rodríguez, "Cancelarán 12 mil 109 plazas en el Ejército," Prensa Libre, April 24, 2004, accessed March 27, 2017, http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/guatemala/cancelaran.htm.

freedom of movement. To counter this, Guatemala can leverage support from partner nations to battle narco-traffic, as well as boosting training capabilities with the Counter-Narco Terrorism (CNT) program, which provides non-lethal equipping and training to host nation forces from the pertinent Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC).[2]

Primary Research Question

Has the CNT been useful in developing the capabilities of the Kaibiles – Guatemalan Special Forces – to fight narco-trafficking in Guatemala?

Secondary Research Questions

It is imperative to conduct a thorough evaluation of the first issue so the secondary question and sub-questions can be answered in detail:

1. What capabilities have the Kaibiles been trained on?
2. What are common interests in fighting narco trafficking shared by the U.S. and Guatemala? What is the current status of contributions from the U.S. to Guatemala?

Assumptions

Guatemala, like many countries in Central America, has been listed as a major drug transit route through which drug cartels launch trafficking efforts aimed to reach the U.S.' marketable population since 1990.[3] The cartels operate with the cooperation of

[2] Security Assistance Monitor, Section 1033 Counter-Drug Assistance, 2011, 1, accessed April 14, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/data/country/military/Section%201033%20Counter-Drug%20Assistance/.

[3] U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," *Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs* 1 (March 2010): 15.

those who are able to profit from this illegal activity. The following are the assumptions on which this research rests and the foundation from which this research will analyze and develop viable solutions to the primary and supporting research questions:

3. Guatemala has specific points along its multiple borders where cartels dominate and control the influx of all drug traffic from South America destined for the U.S.
4. Drug Cartels locate themselves at tactical points close to the border to easily maneuver back and forth between different countries as a means of evading the pertinent authorities.
5. For every eight drug smuggling attempts, at least one is successful in reaching the U.S.
6. Drug Cartels dominate several sectors of the populace, especially the poor.
7. Cartels that are geographically closer to the U.S. have feuds with Cartels located in the most isolated locations in Guatemala. These cartels have lethal capabilities that enable them to maintain their superior land position and smuggle drugs to the U.S. at key points of entry.

Definitions

Counter Narco-Terrorism Program (CNT)–Department of Defense program designed to conduct interdiction of drugs and disrupt terrorism in order to deter drug traffickers. Within this definition, narco-terrorism may include assassinations, extortion, hijackings, bombings, kidnappings directed against judges, elected officials, or law enforcement agents, and disruption of a legitimate government to divert attention from drug operations.

Drug Traffic Organizations–Refers to complex organizations with highly defined command-and-control structures that produce, transport, and distribute large quantities of one or more illicit drugs.

The Kaibiles–As part of the Guatemalan Special Forces Brigade, the Kaibiles are a specialized interdiction force whose motto is: *If I advance, follow me. If I stop, urge me on. If I retreat, kill me.* Kaibiles are trained to conduct counter-terrorism, and counter-narcotics operations. Their primary mission is to support national objectives and security.

U.S. Special Operations Forces (USSOF)–Those Active and Reserve Component forces of the Military Services designated by the Secretary of Defense and specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations.[4] SOF are usually employed in harsh or politically and diplomatically complex environments and are characterized by one or more of the following: time-sensitivity low visibility, work with or through indigenous forces, greater requirements for regional orientation and cultural knowledge, and a much higher degree of risk. Special Operations provide Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) and chiefs of mission with discrete and precise options that can be synchronized with activities of other interagency partners to achieve U.S. Government (USG) objectives.[5]

[4] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 225.

[5] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 10.

Scope

Narco-traffic takes place in all Central America, and Guatemala is no exception. The U.S. Government fights narco-traffic by promoting and enforcing CNT programs in Guatemala and other areas of Central America. These efforts improve partner nation capacity to more effectively combat criminal organizations directly involved in narco-trafficking. It works in conjunction with other funded programs like the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), in which the U.S. provides training, advising, and assisting to partner nations in order to improve the professional capabilities, equipment, and integrity of Guatemala's military and other institutions.

The timeframe for this research is October 2010 to November 2015, with a focus on the influence that drug traffic cartels had in Guatemala and the actions taken by the Guatemalan government, including the employment of the Kaibiles with assistance of USSOF, to eliminate this problem.

Limitations

This investigation is focused on the continuing efforts by the Department of Defense, in collaboration with the Guatemalan military, within the above-mentioned timeline but not limited to resource from information that may be relevant and contributes with supporting the research process. Additionally, other variables such as the actions of countries beyond the Central American Region, including countries in South America, also influence the impact that Guatemalan drug cartels have on the U.S. through means of narco-traffic.

Classified documents (e.g. communication between military and government officials not found in open source) will not be used in this research, which serves as another limitation of the project.

Delimitations

The author has established an investigation timeline going from October 2010 to November 2015. The mentioned timeline was selected as criteria to avoid using old information that may not be suitable to support specific discussion points related to drug cartels and DTOs in the Guatemalan region. The author also gave emphasis to other military efforts conducted in Central America that include smaller operations that derive from the main funded programs, and it will maintain a specific attention on joint efforts of DoD, USSOF and Guatemalan Kaibiles during CNT operations. The author will discuss authorizations from the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for the Fiscal Years 1991, 1998 and 2017. The NDAA Section 333 FY 2016 will not be discussed in this investigation, as this NDAA generated significant changes to the CNT program.

Significance of Study

The significance of the study is to demonstrate that security and border protection efforts must continue in Guatemala to combat narco-trafficking. When combining a strong defense posture from the Guatemalan government, and full cooperation of the Department of Defense (DoD) through the employment of programs such as CNT, it becomes possible for Guatemala to limit the effectiveness of DTOs. Although DTOs consistently seek to obtain lucrative gains by taking advantage of the porous borders that

exist around most of the country, USSOF contribution through training, advising, and assisting Guatemalan partners, will increase their potential to achieving success in fighting narco-terrorism.[6] The author will expand on important data related to the National Security Strategy 2015 Interest # 4 which promotes peace and security efforts, also the National Military Strategy 2015, by addressing interest # 4, which covers the aspect of security, confidence and reliability of our allies.

CNT legal authorities will be discussed more in detail in chapter two by covering the NDAA Section 1004 FY 1991, and NDAA Section 1033 FY 1998, culminating with NDAA Section 333 FY 2017.

[6] U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control Strategy," 180.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Guatemala, from a strategic perspective, is in Central America, providing an easy route for South American cocaine and heroin destined for the U.S. and cash returning to South America. Narco-terrorists take full advantage of Guatemala's geographical location to expand their illegal trade as reports suggest that the narcotics trade is increasingly linked to arms trafficking, adding to the instability in the region.[7]

As shown in figure 1, Guatemala is situated in a unique position in Central America, connecting with four international borders, providing access to two bodies of water. By focusing on this unique location, the intent behind this research is to identify the factors, including security capability, level of proficiency, and training needed for Guatemalan Special Forces to improve security of their border. This will provide an additional point of view to the existing literature regarding border porosity in Guatemala.

Although other literature has been published about Guatemala and narco traffic, the author seeks to provide a perspective from the integration of USSOF capabilities with the Department of State (DoS) and Department of Defense. This is to better illustrate regional effects from the illegal drug traffic, trade and its direct impact on the U.S. This research project is oriented to be a contribution to support the improvement of security and stability in the Western Hemisphere, with a primary focus in the Central America region.

[7] U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control Strategy," 118.

Figure 1. Political Map of Guatemala

Source: Lonely Planet, "Guatemala," accessed 27 March 2017, http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/central-america/guatemala/.

Describing Drug Traffic Organizations

DTOs in Guatemala are known by the distinctive name of "*Familias*" instead of the common descriptor "cartels", normally applied in other countries of Central and South America. There are three *Familias* in Guatemala who have the most influence: the

Mendoza Family,[8] the Lorenzana Family,[9] and the Huistas,[10] which operate in the departments of Isabel, Petén, and Zacapa, respectively. The *Familias* have major control over the populace, especially the poor. Their recruitment campaigns are quite effective since they bribe or bait their selected prospects by offering tempting amounts of money that are hard to refuse. Those who accept such financial gifts soon find themselves trapped, working for the *Familias* with no option to leave. The *Familias* do not discriminate on prospects and even military members are recruited by these organizations. They receive little to no resistance from their targeted victims because at least half of the population in Guatemala experience some degree of poverty.[11]

Events of Relevance Between 2010–2015

One of the most important events of relevance for Guatemala within the above-mentioned timeline is perhaps the election in 2012 of former Army General Otto Perez Molina. Although a controversial figure, due to his participation in the violent counterinsurgency campaign of the 1980s, he surprisingly promotes policy towards

[8] Insight Crime, "Los Mendoza," March 9, 2017, accessed March 29, 2017, http://es.insightcrime.org/noticias-sobre-crimen-organizado-en-guatemala/los-mendoza.

[9] Insight Crime, "Los Lorenzana," March 9, 2017, accessed March 29, 2017, http://es.insightcrime.org/noticias-sobre-crimen-organizado-en-guatemala/los-lorenzana.

[10] Insight Crime, "Élites y Crimen Organizado en Guatemala: Los Huistas," September 1, 2016, accessed March 29, 2017, http://es.insightcrime.org/investigaciones/elites-y-crimen-organizado-en-guatemala-los-huistas.

[11] Insight Crime "Guatemala," March 9, 2017, accessed April 12, 2017, http://www.insightcrime.org/guatemala-organized-crime-news/guatemala.

crime.[12] During his term in office, Molina believed that legalizing the use and transportation of illicit drugs was feasible and beneficial for his country. He argued that if the U.S., as the most power nation in the world, could not reduce illegal drug consumption, why should Guatemala try and combat the traffic.

For this reason, Molina stated that his country has been forced to seek for alternate measurements to the current war on drugs, to stem violence related to drug trafficking in Guatemala and neighboring countries.[13]This is an idea that U.S. officials have naturally opposed to, because from the U.S. perspective, legalization would not affect nor stop organized criminal elements from trafficking.[14]

The U.S. Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (INCSR) contain relevant information related to narcotics statistics and interdiction reports about Guatemala. This annual document reveals important facts about the working relationship between the U.S. and the Government of Guatemala (GOG), suggesting that Guatemala remains a major transshipment point for drugs destined for the U.S.

The main contributors to the long existing problem of narco traffic are the pervasive corruption in the GOG and porous ports and borders, allowing the easier

[12] Maureen Taft-Morales, R42580, *Guatemala: Political, Security, and Socio-Economic Conditions and U.S. Relations* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2014), 11.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

movement of illicit products and bulk cash.[15] The report suggests that limited governmental and security presence impede effective law enforcement and judicial actions against drug crimes. This in turn allows transnational DTOs to transport drugs and other chemicals, along with bulk cash through Guatemala with little difficulty, especially within the extensive unprotected border areas.[16]

This resulted in an estimated 400 metric tons (MT) of cocaine smuggled through Guatemala every year, the great majority of it destined for the U.S. market.[17] In compensation to the lack of law enforcement within the judiciary system, Guatemala maintains interdiction efforts with the assistance of the U.S., and have formed the Interagency Task Force (IATF)-Chorti on the Honduran-Guatemalan border to fight DTOs.[18] This task force compliments IATF-Tecún Umán on the Guatemalan-Mexican Border, because it includes police, military, customs and immigration officials. This is a reaction that has resulted from the constant corruption that exist within the governmental system.[19] In the meantime, U.S. continues to support the Government of Guatemala to improve its counter narcotics program efforts.

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[15] U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control Strategy," 180.

[16] Ibid., 183.

[17] Ibid., 182.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 183.

Border Porosity

Border porosity is perhaps the major contributor to the flourishing illegal drug trade in Guatemala. The term "porosity", about borders, denotes to the inability of a state to regulate its border effectively and is characterized by a high rate of illegal movement through it.[20] It is often associated with illegal traffic whether of drugs, arms or humans. In other definitions, it also refers to the lack of physical control of a border, whether negligently or purposely, where the entry of materials, drugs, and illegal items flow across without any obstruction or verification. DTOs in Guatemala do precisely that, by working with “hidden forces”[21] —so— called Illegal Clandestine Security Apparatuses (CIACS according to its Spanish translation).[22] CIACS are mainly composed of active and former military officers, special unit operatives and high-visibility government dignitaries, people who have access or can get access to border entry points. DTOs concentrate their efforts by exploiting specific points of entry, minimizing the number of borders crossed, the amount of personnel needed for crossings, and the number of officials that must be bribed.

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[20] Labo Abdulahi Afolayan A.A, *Trans-Border Movement and Trading. A case study of a borderland in southwestern Nigeria: Trans-Borders Studies*, Open Edition Books, 2000, accessed April 2, 2017, http://books.openedition.org/ifra/973?lang=en.

[21] Steven S. Dudley, *Drug trafficking organizations in Central America*, Wilson Center, accessed November 17, 2016, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/defa,ult/files/Chapter%202%20Drug%20Trafficking%20Organizations%20in%0Central%20America%20Transportistas,%20Mexican%20Cartels%20and%20Maras.pdf.

[22] Western Hemisphere Affairs, *CIAGS Guatemala*, January 24, 2017, accessed April 14, 2017, http://fahistoryblog.com/western-affairs/2017/01/24/ciacs-guatemala.

According to U.S. officials in Guatemala, approximately 70 percent of the drug traffic intended to reach the U.S., arrives from the Pacific littoral coast.[23] Although the movement of narcotics is more complicated by land due to the risk of being detected, DTOs continue finding innovative methods to hide cargo in plain sight. DTOs can achieve their smuggling objectives because Guatemalan authorities do not prioritize their border control or maintain an adequate ratio of checkpoints along the most extensive borders as it is the case in the northern Guatemala-Mexico border that measures 600 miles long and only has 8 checkpoints.[24] As shown in figure 2, this demonstrates and supports the existence of porosity of Guatemalan borders.

[23] Cynthia J. Arnson et al., *Organized Crime In Central America: The Northern Triangle, in Woodrow Wilson Centers Reports on the Americas* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Latin America Program, November 2011), accessed April 24, 2017, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/LAP_single_page.pdf, 47.

[24] Steven S. Dudley, *Drug Trafficking organizations in Central America*, Wilson Center, May 2010, accessed November 17, 2016, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a236489.pdf.

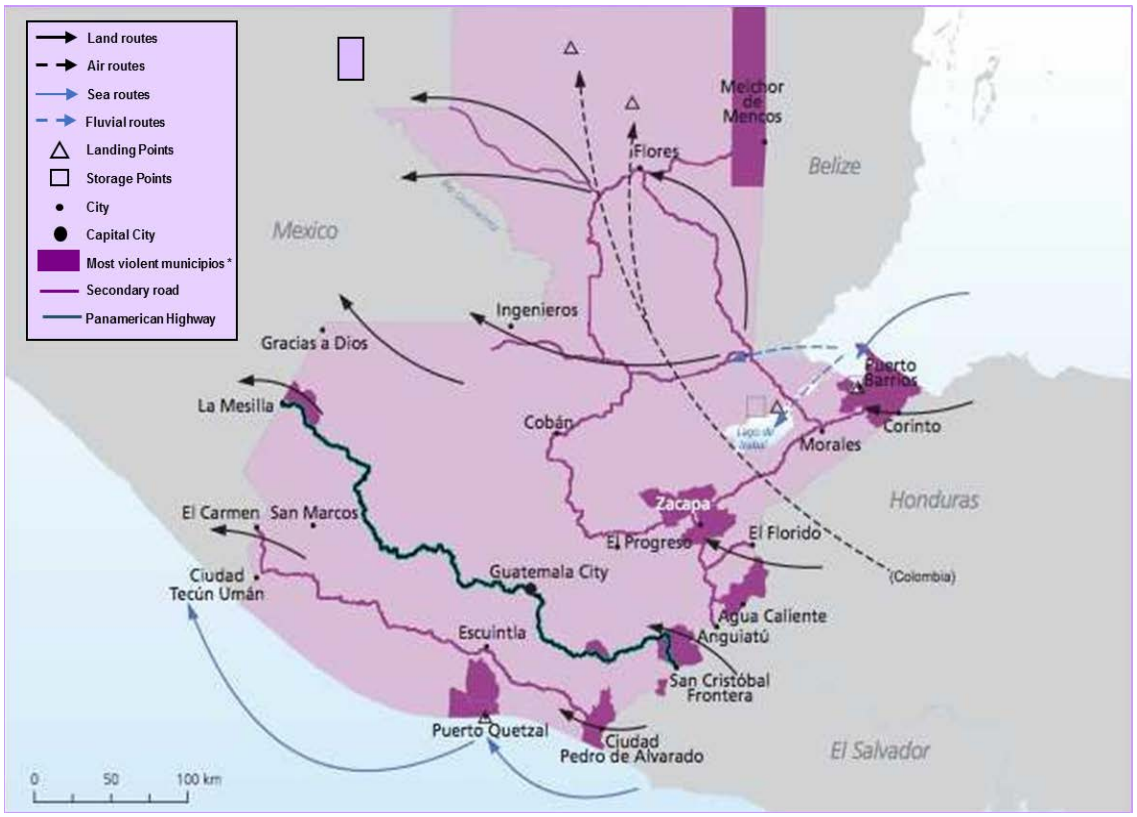

Figure 2. Cocaine trafficking routes in Guatemala

Source: Christina Sterbenz, "This UN Map Show How Cocaine Flows Through Latin America: Guatemala," Business Insider, December 13, 2013, accessed April 1, 2017, http://www.businessinsider.com/cocaine-flow-latin-america-2013-12.

CNT Program and the Kaibiles

U.S. Law under Section 1004 of FY 91 of the National Defense Authorization Act,[25] supports the employment of security activities such as CNT under specific parameters, oriented to overall ensure security of the nation and partners. This law is

[25] Office Under the Secretary of Defense for Policy, *DoD Assistance to Foreign Security Forces*, 1211 (a) Report to Congress, August 1, 2016, accessed April 24, 2017, http://open.defense.gov/portals/23/Documents/foreignasst/2016_Section_1211 (a)_Report_to_Congress_on_DoD_Assistance_to_Foreign_Security_Forces.pdf, 9.

covered and discussed in the National Security Strategy. An important point related to U.S. enduring national interests within this document states on Interest #4, "A rules-based international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges."[26] This interest is well aligned with national security interest # 4 "The security, confidence, and reliability of our allies."[27]

This principle is better supported in Section 1004 FY 1991 of the NDAA,[28] which authorizes the Defense Department to U.S. and foreign security forces additional support for counter-narcotic activities if requested. As amended, Section 1004 authorized DOD to provide support for the Counternarcotic and counter transnational organized crime activities of U.S. and foreign security forces and law enforcement agencies. This includes maintenance and repair of equipment, transportation, training, providing infrastructure development, detecting and monitoring drug trafficking, establishing command, control, communications and computer networks, aerial and ground reconnaissance, and provisions of linguist and intelligence analysis services.[29]

NDAA section 1033 FY 1998 Section 1033 permits the Defense Department to assist 35 countries, including Guatemala within this list, in Counternarcotic efforts by providing non-lethal protective and utility personnel equipment, including navigation

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[26] *National Security Strategy*, 2001, 2.

[27] *National Military Strategy*, 2015, 5.

[28] Security Assistance Monitor, "Section 1004 Counter-Drug Assistance," accessed April 14, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/content/section%201004%20counter-drug%20assistance.

[29] Ibid.

equipment, secure and non-secure communications equipment, radar equipment, night vision systems, vehicles, aircraft and boats.[30]

As mentioned under the delimitations, “NDAA Section 333” will not be discussed as it generated significant changes to the CNT. The implementation guidance for these changes is yet to be published. However, it is beneficial to mention that unlike in the past, the Department of Defense it is now required to have concurrence with the State Department to conduct or support any program authorized by subsection (a) under section 333 of the NDAA. This section authorizes the Secretary of Defense to conduct or support a program or programs to provide training and equipment to the national security forces of one or more countries for the purpose of building capacity of such forces to conduct Counterterrorism, Counter-illicit drug trafficking operations, Military Intelligence, Maritime and border security operations, and operations or activities that contribute to an international coalition operation that is determined by the Secretary to be in the national interest of the U.S.[31]

Placement of authorities that enable the U.S. to conduct security programs abroad has helped immensely to maintain counter narco-traffic efforts in Guatemala from a multi-national cooperation perspective. Along that Line of Effort (LOE), Guatemalan contribution to this type of fight, goes as far back as 1975 with the creation of the Elite

[30] Security Assistance Monitor, “Section 1033 Counter-Drug Assistance,” 2011, accessed April 14, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/data/country/military/Section%201033%20Counter-Drug%20Assistance/.

[31] 10 U.S. Code § 333 - Foreign security forces: authority to build capacity: Authority, December 23, 2016, accessed April 16, 2017, https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/333.

Special Forces Unit. The founding of the Kaibiles was a product of the Guatemalan counterinsurgency campaign against guerrilla forces successfully defeated by the government in 1967.[32]

The KAIBIL was originally designed as an intense Ranger/Jungle Expert skill course. This Commando Course was estblished in January 1975 at El Infierno, Municipality of La Polvora, Melchor de Menos District, Peten Province. The Commando School ran until March of that year, and it was open only to cadets from the National Military Academy. However, the "Commando" term was not well liked because of its British origins. One of the instructors of the course suggested the term "KAIBIL". KAIBIL BALAM was an indian chief who was never captured by the conquering Spaniards. Kaibil in Quiche means: Wise men, astute and strong as two tigers.[33]

The KAIBIL training center was reopened later in 1975 for airborne qualified males in the armed forces. In January 1989, Instructive 3-800001 transferred the KAIBIL Training Center from El Infierno to the old ZM23 garrison at Poptún Municipality, Peten Province. Since January 1990, the KAIBILES have been organized into the KAIBIL Training and Operations Center. This outfit comprised the KAIBIL School, the Professional Galled School, a KAIBIL Support & Services Company, 1st Strategic

[32] LTC Mario M. Hernández Ponce, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Guatemala" (Master's thesis, U.S. Army War College, 1991), 1-31, accessed April 14, 2017, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a236489.pdf.

[33] Julio Montes, "Central American SPECOPS Weapons: Weapons I: Guatemala, Belize and El Salvador: Kaibiles: Guatemala," *Small Arms Review* (2011): 1, accessed April 14, 2017, http://www.smallarmsreview.com/display.article.cfm?idarticles=2194.

Reserve Infantry Battalion, and the KAIBIL Special Forces Unit.[34] The KAIBIL Special Forces Unit has deployed two KAIBIL Special Operations Groups. In 1997, the KAIBIL Special Forces Unit added two KAIBIL companies to the order of battle while retaining its two Spec Ops Groups. These two companies operate in a more "conventional" counterinsurgency and light infantry task, while the groups operate in deep reconnaissance and Spec Ops strikes.[35]

To build a Kaibil, aspirants go in a voluntary training that lasts 60 days, goes offered to candidates twice a year, and it is expected that only an approximate of the 20 percent of every class will graduate. Kaibil training maintains its integrity today, as in the same manner it was structured back in the 1970s. Although there is an obscure past to this elite organization, which placed them on the spotlight with a questionable reputation related to violation of human rights. However, the true purpose of the Kaibiles evolves around fighting narcoterrorism, drug cartels, insurgency and ironically, those violators of human rights.[36] The Kaibiles are proficient at specialized tasks ranging from sniper proficiency to crisis response. Figure 3 exemplifies these characteristics of the Kaibiles which demonstrates the latitude they have to conduct a diversity of missions. These

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Guatemala Human Rights Commission, "Guatemala's Elite Special Forces Unit: The Kaibiles: The Kaibiles," USA Fact Sheet, 2011, accessed February 18, 2017, http://ghrc-usa.org/Publications/factsheet_kaibiles.pdf.

missions are not limited to take place in their native Guatemala only, but also extend abroad from Belize to as far as the Republic of Congo.[37]

This operational readiness tells a story about the capacity of the Kaibiles to provide security to the nation through employment of its highly trained and capable personnel. This elite force remains ready to execute at any given time, trained to perform and survive in the most austere environments, coincidentally, the same type environment preferred by narco-traffickers and drug cartels to conduct their nefarious activities to remain undetected. But keeping in mind that if the force is not employed appropriately, they could easily wind up at the mercy of temptation, as criminal organizations in neighbor countries are in constant predatory efforts to recruit members of the Kaibiles, which creates a challenge to the alignment efforts from the government of Guatemala to maintain their force capacity at a critically needed level of proficiency and integrity.[38]

[37] "Brigada de Fuerzas Especiales: Reseña Histórica," Ejército de Guatemala, 2016, accessed February 18, 2017, http://www.mindef.mil.gt/comandos/kaibil/historia.html.

[38] Tim Padgett, "Guatemala's Kaibiles: A Notorious Commando Unit Wrapped Up in Central America's Drug War," *Time*, July 14, 2011, accessed April 7, 2017, http://world.time.com/2011/07/14/guatemalas-kaibil-terror-from-dictators-to-drug-cartels/.

Figure 3. Kaibil soldier

Source: .S. Army Staff Sgt. Osvaldo Equite, “Guatemalan Kaibiles, U.S. Special Forces Promote Security through Partnership,” Dialogo-Americas, 13 March 2017, accessed 1 April 2017, https://dialogo-americas.com/en/articles/guatemalan-kaibiles-us-special-forces-promote-security-through-partnership.
NOTE: Illustration 3 shows a Guatemalan Kaibil soldier verifying a pistol shots group during marksmanship training. (Photo: U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Osvaldo Equite)

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research will proceed through four parts and rely heavily on qualitative analysis of relevant and available text and narratives. The first part will focus on U.S. CNT program and narco-trafficking in Guatemala to provide background information relevant to the study. This phase should yield tentative answers to the secondary research questions: What are common interests in fighting narco-trafficking shared by the U.S. and Guatemala? What is the current status of contributions from the U.S. to Guatemala?

The second part will center on the Guatemalan Special Forces to establish relevant background information and determine current capabilities, historical record of performance, and level of integration with the CNT program. This information will serve as the foundation for part three which will focus on the related to accusations of Human Rights abuses and other legal issues related to the Kaibilies.

Part four will analyze the data generated in the previous phases to answer the primary research question, whether the CNT been useful in developing the capabilities of the Kaibiles – Guatemalan Special Forces – to fight narco-trafficking in Guatemala. To better reflect the term useful, the author refers to effects achieved by the Kaibiles through development of activities with partner nation involving CNT. Therefore, enabling this unit to reach the required level of proficiency that is necessary to accomplish fundamental tasks, which can be measured through employment of MOPs, and to verify the veracity of those effects, the employment of the MOEs.

The criteria used to determine effects, will be established within the concepts of security, interdiction and stability, which generates a mechanism to govern whether the CNT program influences the Kaibiles performance and if in fact these effects can either be measurable or definable.

The research aims to address the impact that the CNT program has in Guatemala, specifically in terms of the ability of Guatemalan Special Forces to fight narco-terrorism. Both the U.S. and Guatemala have a shared interest in counter narco-terrorism as the illegal drug trade threatens the stability and security of the Western Hemisphere. The focus is on Guatemala due to its geographical position and centrality in the illegal drug trade. This results in direct consequences on the security and stability in the region. The research will use a qualitative methodology to answer the primary research question and will assess the effectiveness of the Kaibiles and the impact that CNT programs, specifically the support and training provided by USSOF, has on the Guatemalan Special Forces. This research will only examine open-source material.

The author foresees that some of the data needed to answer the research question, and to obtain evidence for the conclusions and recommendations of this thesis will not be as abundant as other sources of information related to CNT. As a measure of mitigation, other U.S. government and international projects will be reviewed to offer a holistic view. Additionally, this will provide the opportunity to other investigators to continue expanding on the matters of CNT. An aspect of national security and stability not only for the U.S. but for all countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Due to density of the topic of investigation, the author will maintain focus on Guatemala and the Kaibiles only, since including other countries and their security forces

would obligate the author to deepen into more areas of investigation that would not necessarily support the objective to answer the primary and secondary research questions for this investigation project in specific. However, it is imperative to include several acronyms into this research process such as CARSI, FEN, and GEIR among others. Putting these terms into context, will help clarifying these entities fit into the scheme of security infrastructure for Guatemala.

The conclusions and recommendations for this investigation will be based on facts found, which reflect the view of the author. Experience and knowledge, will be utilized by the author about the subject, as well as historical accounts to confirm the veracity of the information placed in this document.

Part 1: Research of U.S. CNT program

Part 2: Research of background data for the Kaibiles

Part 3: Research of legalities and Human Rights related to Guatemala

Part 4: Analysis and organization of data

Collection Plan

All information will be derived from news articles, papers, and data from open web sources, as well as official U.S. government publications with public release authorizations. The author will make use of personal and professional ties to the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Eglin Air Force Base, Florida as well as partner nation students who have specialized knowledge in the topic at hand.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Looking for a definition to the term success can become a difficult task, as success can be defined and measured in a variety of ways, whether through opinions, or statistics.[39] It can be applicable, especially when gathering all the data to support an event or action that needs to be defined as successful. This thought methodology applies to recognizing that Guatemala possesses a successful military, and competent civil entities who put out their hardest effort towards maintaining a safer nation.

The road ahead is extensive regarding safety and stability for Guatemala, and it is important to note that the Kaibiles stand in a position of excellence. A position achieved throughout their contributions to national security, by working together with the political power, synchronizing operational priorities with outside entities like USSOF and the Department of State to mention a few. This cooperation has created the opportunity for the establishment of ideal conditions for the development of stability and security for the people of Guatemala by conducting the most dangerous missions against narco-terrorist elements.[40]

The message that flourishes from these actions conducted by the Kaibiles, is a proponent of hope and security for the nation of Guatemala.

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[39] Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0, *Mission Command* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 16.

[40] U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Osvaldo Equite, "Guatemalan Kaibiles, U.S. Special Forces Promote Security through Partnership," *Diálogo*, February 19, 2015, 1, accessed April 27, 2017, https://dialogo-americas.com/en/articles/guatemalan-kaibiles-us-special-forces-promote-security-through-partnership.

The Kaibiles are living proof of the tremendous relationship that exist between the U.S. and Guatemala. This is a legitimate reason to maintain that good working relationship that supports the interests from both nations, oriented to maintain safer borders, monitored and secured. This initiative must be envisioned to continue supporting the idea of maintaining a balance between functionality within the governmental system, and the legacy of self-preservation, as a stable government that contributes with efforts to diminish the influence from drug traffickers and terrorist groups who constantly attempt to cause disequilibrium within the poor and limited resourced sectors of the populace.

This should be a motivator for the government of Guatemala to become firm about enforcing its policies and laws against criminal entities. By doing so, this ensures that rules are abided by those who represent justice and authority within the country. Therefore, turning into a high obstacle to climb for DTOs and criminal organizations.

Regarding financial assistance provided by the U.S. to support counter-drug programs, the result seems to only be scratching the surface of the problem it is intended to solve. This is a common theme seen in Guatemala among the different protection services. Financial support means, not properly distributed to the right areas of operation, often create gaps that deter the capacity of the force to effectively achieve effects. A discrepancy of this nature generally causes adversity and miscommunication, followed by a sentiment of isolation from those who do not receive full benefit from such assistance provided by the U.S. Lessons learned suggest that it is important for Guatemala to

establish a framework that clearly defines the relationships among its different protection entities to better implement authority and leadership.[41]

Between 2009 and 2013 alone, nearly $35 million funded by CARSI (Central America Regional Security Initiative) were allocated to Guatemala to support the aviation program that maintained and renewed police and air force helicopters and planes, while offering training to aircrews.[42] This is only to show that financial assistance to Guatemala perhaps, needs to also be directed to support critical priorities like border protection and outfitting of specialized military units. If financial aid is allocated to the right areas where prominent results are likely to happen, it will take some of the burden off those sectors that must work double to compensate the limited support they receive.

The Kaibiles by far, are one of the most competitive units in Guatemala to assist in the counter narco terrorism efforts. This is because they possess skillsets to counter narco-traffic activities given that most of the illicit trade takes place in austere environments like jungle, swamps, maritime, being these are the most preferred environments that organized crime prefers to flawlessly accomplish their objective.

In view of these circumstances, is fair to compare similarities that can be related to those of USSOF, the Kaibiles carry a significant responsibility linked to the security of Guatemala. Therefore, the point of origin to creating initiatives that can promote security

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[41] Gillian S. Oak, Building the Guatemalan Interagency Task Force Tecún Umán (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2015), accessed January 31, 2017, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR885.html.

[42] Adamm Isacson et al., “Time to Listen: Trends in U.S. Security Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean,” Center for International Policy, 12, accessed February 11, 2017, http://www.ciponline.org/images/uploads/Time_to_Listen.pdf.

programs and broadening projects that support national and strategic objectives, must be discussed sooner than later, and consciously debated among the decision makers. It is the challenge ahead to tie in different purposes at the strategic level, synchronized with the near and long term goals, to effectively break down the work load so that every moving piece within the force, will carry to obtain a desired end state.

In order to remain innovative and continue evolving from conventional practice, and lessons learned, it is necessary to allow the operational environment to develop. This enhances the purpose of understanding the dynamics of what composes a good working system. Additionally, it offers answers when involved in complicated situations. Therefore, the definition of success, even if is broad, it can also represent something tangible in the way proposed objectives are achieved. Determining a structure and framework that can be shaped into a group of options, to generate solutions to solve complexity and asymmetry currently taking place around the globe.

Integration and interoperability between agencies, are elements conducive to create positive conditions enabling unification. This also facilitates its members the latitude to exercise judgment and team work to considerable levels of effectiveness. In the case of Guatemala, the idea of integration and interoperability, helps establishing mechanisms that not only strengthen the nation capacity, but it solidifies legitimacy and unity.

USSOF Objectives in Support of Guatemala

Referencing to USSOF objectives, some relationships must be established in different operation areas around the globe, but a question must be asked about how can USSOF capacity be used in support of strategic, operational and tactical objectives? This

is a question that can often help in the understanding of the way USSOF obtains results, when working with partner nation side by side. In a more defined manner, the intended purpose and existence of USSOF reverts to global security of other nations, through collaboration efforts from partners.

To understand the objectives USSOF works to establish, it is first needed for the author to provide a brief narrative about what U.S. Special Operations Forces composition is, and the different purposes and missions this organization is designed to conduct. Special Operations Forces encompass a diversity of uniquely selected and highly trained units from all four U.S. military services, with different backgrounds and competencies. The U.S. Army Special Operations Forces carry on inventory half of all special operators and include the largest and oldest element of SOF, the Special Forces, which are identifiable by their green berets, as well as Rangers, aviators, civil affairs soldiers, and military information support operations troops.

The Navy Special Operations Forces include the well-known SEALs (Sea, Air, Land), and the Marines Special Operations Command, which was formed in 2006. The Air Force Special Operations Command includes both pilots and ground personnel.[43] These skillsets serve to collectively contribute to the overall success of the entire Special Operations Forces organization, with 12 core activities being counter-insurgency and

[43] Linda Robinson, "The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces." *Council on Foreign Relations* no. 66 (April 2013): 5.

counter-terrorism some of the most specific missions that help combating drug traffic and terrorism. [44]

This specialized training is what the government of Guatemala and its military specialized units depend on to effectively counter the existing problem against narco-terrorism and the Familias who threaten against the government and the public order. From a neutral perspective, this is a directional approach to a complex situation that requires the application of critical thinking for it to be solved utilizing full participation of power brokers in the aspect of national security. As it is shown on the different databases, the U.S. military assistance to Latin America has increased since 2013 in which SOF is taking the lead by providing relevant training to units in Central America, including the Kaibiles.[45]

As USSOF continues to establish its presence in Central America, so is the demand for joint training with specialized units throughout that region. USSOF credibility has elevated to a respectable level. Their readiness and competence, is a result of unique cultural skills and advanced training that may not be available from conventional units. Therefore, the dependency between special and conventional units must remain synchronized in view of integration and a rapid operational tempo to

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[44] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 30.

[45] Adam Isacson, "Data Indicate Big Increase in Special Operations Training in Latin America: Latin America and the Caribbean," *Security Assistance Monitor*, July 27, 2015, accessed February 13, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/blog/data-indicate-big-increase-special-operations-training-latin-america%20/.

develop partner nation capacity in critical aspects of protection through the various security programs that are offered to U.S. partners.

Ultimately, U.S. Special Operations Forces also work under building partner capacity (BPC) by with and through partner nation: a definition that is not a doctrinal term or a military task. However, leaders in the U.S. military often refer to BPC as a goal, a mission, and a task it is not officially codified in U.S. military.[46]

The USSOF employment footprint is being marked greatly throughout the continent, through hard challenges that show the success from conducting training activities within different countries in Central America specially Guatemala. The broad variety of specialties utilized by SOF, ranging from civil matters to direct action, certainly provide more options than limitations in terms of fortifying the capacity of other military entities. Bearing in mind that under the concept more is better, this generates alternatives from the operational perspective. Furthermore, this offers a sense of relief and most of all, hope that the forces of the countries in Central America are inspired to contribute and give the maximum effort to weaken and defeat transnational crime, DTOs and any threat to a peaceful society.

Leading by example, taking initiative to counter drugs and combat terrorism, puts USSOF at a considerable level of risk. This demonstrates the level of commitment acquired by SOF, for the purpose of providing security and stability across the hemisphere. This is a characteristic that outlines the difference in which SOF is always

[46] Anthony Heisler, *By, with, and through: The Theory and Practice of Special Operations Capacity-Building* (Monterey: Calhoun, 2014), 44.

willing to take extra risk, drawing a line of excellence that elevates normal standards of performance to a more demanding level for their personnel.

The endstate of USSOF, in relation to all projects and goals towards affecting crime efforts in Guatemala, is to provide a more in depth insight about techniques procedures and more dynamic standards for units to really defeat narco-terrorism. Utilizing lessons learned and innovative methods, allows the forces to concentrate and focus on specific task that align with the plans and intentions of the nation to a different level. While this only represent a small portion of many of the things that need to be accomplished in terms of providing security and stability, the cooperation and synchrony of Guatemala and the U.S. through the different echelons and agencies, sets the tone to constructing a solid path that can be utilized by others and continue improving and ensuring that the fight does not end, but continues in an improved form.

Employment of SOF comes at a cost and it is not cheap. Because of the work is done in smaller groups, the risk to mission is greater and it must be always mitigated with justifications as to what level of risk a determined unit it is going to operate.[47] The willingness of the DoD and USSOCOM to continue building force capacity, while maintaining the Kaibilies as a highly effective force, will shape the way plans and objectives are being designed. It will serve to develop long term plans that support the fight against narco-terrorism. Though it may appear simple to state, the fight against narco-traffic will certainly be active and hard to eradicate for a long time. But it is up to

[47] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 10.

the figures of influence to ensure all efforts are canalized to a path leading to max benefit for all who contribute on the global fight against narco-terrorism.

Missions in Central America have ramped up specially those involving specialized training that includes not only military tactics, but also civil affairs and information operations, averaging an approximate cost of nearly $17 billion each year. The training has migrated to countries in South America as well as in Central America like it has in Guatemala.[48] Remarkably, there have been fewer deployments to Guatemala than much of the rest of Central America, probably due to matters strictly related to human right issues, preventing this country from receiving any U.S. military assistance for many years.[49]

Special Operations Forces deployments aim towards filling the gaps that would weaken the support to precautions taken to ensure that partner nation units do what is right per international law. However, these speculations can lead to partial conclusions that defeat the purpose of pursuing results that will benefit the U.S. in terms of national security and ways to defeat or decrease the drug traffic. In the end, if there are entities that have limited access to information and knowledge concerning ground truth, this information should be resourced through means on the ground. For example, the State

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[48] TELESUR, "U.S. Triples Special Ops Training Missions in Latin America: U.S. Special Operations Forces training missions, which includes psy-ops and intelligence gathering instruction, have spiked in Central America since 2010," August 30, 2016, accessed February 15, 2017, http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/US-Triples-Special-Ops-Training-Budget-for-Latin-America-20160830-0035.html.

[49] Sarah Kinosian and Adam Isacson, "U.S. Special Operations in Latin America: Parallel Diplomacy? Documents Show Special Ops Training in the Region Tripled From 2007 to 2014," *WOLA* (August 30, 2016): 1, accessed February 15, 2017, https://www.wola.org/analysis/u-s-special-operations-latin-america-parallel-diplomacy/.

Department, due to lack of presence in the field, cannot provide an accurate assessment of the situation on the ground. They should leverage USSOF to capture the ground truth for decision makers to have the appropriate information to make policy

The U.S. ambassadors in those countries, are the authority who tracks the actual truth on events within their jurisdiction, but other civilian agencies do not have much visibility over what takes place during the deployments.[50]

As for the CNT program, success is based on a steady partnership that must exist between specialized units from Guatemala and the U.S. This relationship guarantees a high probability of success when it comes to conducting operations in lieu of defeating narco-terrorism and drug cartels in Guatemala.

The U.S. Army Special Forces have been promoting security through partnership with the Guatemalan Kaibiles effectively. With specialized units like the Special Interdiction and Rescue Group (GEIR) or Grupo Especializado de Interdicción y Rescate, it serves the purpose of neutralizing, preventing and acting against any narco-terrorism threat in the country, this being possible with the support of Green Berets assigned to the 7th Special Forces Group (7th SFG), with a mission to keep Guatemala safe for its people.[51]

The GEIR is considered a top fighting force in Guatemala in matters of countering narco-terrorism, and it is mostly or completely conformed by Kaibiles, creating a cohesive relationship that balances in training, that pays off when the

[50] Ibid.

[51] Equite, "Guatemalan Kaibiles," 1.

Guatemalan soldiers put to the test all the training conducted with U.S. partners whom train and advise this elite force on specific tasks to increase survivability of Guatemalan soldiers when facing crime.

For USSOF in Guatemala, the definition of success links to difficulty, especially when it involves operating in complex terrain, facing irregular actors, which requires complete dedication discipline and skills to gain advantage over an asymmetric enemy to then in a proud manner being able to claim the status of successful for the security of the nation.

Measures of Effectiveness and Measures of Performance (Kaibiles)

Unit effectiveness, is determined through the level of preparation attained, demosntrated through executed successful performance. This concept in general, could be applied to the drug traffic situation faced in Guatemala, from the stand point that crime has to be countered against by using the right force. This translates in the manner that, a measure of effectiveness (MOE) helps measure changes in conditions both positive and adverse and helps answer the question of whether right things are being done?[52] That is the moment when partnership between the U.S. comes at a convenience to Guatemala in views of helping working forces to achieve an objective.

The author frames performance of the Guatemalan Kaibiles at a good level of proficiency, based on the unique fashion and methodology used by this unit to train and prepare their personnel. The type of preparation that is critical for this unit to be able to

[52] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 85.

achieve its desired effects when conducting a given task. This can be compared based on an outline provided stating that a *measure of performance* (MOP) is a condition employed to evaluate civil actions that are linked to measuring task accomplishment.[53] A measure of performance from a doctrinal stance assists to answer questions related to actions taken, completion of the task to an acceptable standard, and help verify if a task has been performed correctly. As for the Kaibiles, these measurements are treasured as they can be employed during training cycles, and certainly will help in providing accurate feedback on whether they are doing things right, while working with U.S. partners.

Partnership and multinational training are exactly some of the promoters to help soldiers in maintaining some checklist to keep track of their task completion. As the tasks are accomplished then, the status of those tasks completed can be considered measures of performance. As per doctrine, MOPs would focus on the true force, and in total honesty, the evaluation of task accomplishment summarizes to straightforward answer in a yes or no manner, indicating whether the task was accomplished to the standard or not.[54] The idea of implementing MOPs when working with Kaibiles will improve their credibility.

The development of force is always critical when looking to achieve effects against the enemy. The same effects tied to plans and objectives whether at the tactical, operational and even strategic level. The idea is to innovate throughout new procedures, and techniques, to ensure that both MOPs and MOEs are being implemented in a manner to build a structure that can serve as reference or guidance for the future. Table - 1 shows

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

some of the criteria to base an assessment for both MOPs and MOEs with an Indicator respectively.

Table 1. Assessment Measures and Indicators

MOE	*MOP*	*Indicator*
Answers the question: Are we doing the right things?	Answers the question: Are we doing things right?	Answers the question: What is the status of this MOE or MOP?
Measures purpose accomplishment.	Measures task completion.	Measures raw data inputs to inform MOEs and MOPs.
Measures *why* in the mission statement.	Measures *what* in the mission statement.	Information used to make measuring what or why possible.
No hierarchical relationship to MOPs.	No hierarchical relationship to MOEs.	Subordinate to MOEs and MOPs.
Often formally tracked in formal assessment plans.	Often formally tracked in execution matrixes.	Often formally tracked in formal assessment plans.
Typically challenging to choose the correct ones.	Typically simple to choose the correct ones.	Typically as challenging to select correctly as the supported MOE or MOP.

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 85.
NOTE: Table 1 describes both measures of effectiveness, and performance being employed chronologically with the intent of achieving purpose.

Period of Ocurrence

Mentioned in Chapter One, the period covered for this investigation goes from October 2010, to November 2015. This lapse of time allowed the investigator to compilate important and relevant data related to guatemalan Kaibiles, and the success that a working relationship with USSOF and the State Department have attained from working together in order meet strategic objectives against narcoterrorism. In addition, the experience of the investigator has an important role in the development of key points,

that later in the following chapter will help the author to issue logical and realistic recommendations for other investigators to build upon or to further develop about protection of the force and the way partners in a Joint Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational (JIIM) environment work together.

Since, 2010 to present, the U.S. has provided financial assistance to the northern triangle. This region is composed by the countries of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. The minimun common denominator among these three countries is drug traffic and border issues related to narco-terrorism. Due to a particular interest in the study being conducted, the author focuses in Guatemala alone to depict this aspect in a detailed manner. Truth is, that financial assistance programs funded by the U.S. through the State Department and Defense Department for the purpose of counter-drugs, goes towards training, equipment, intelligence, infrastructure development at military bases for vetted units in support of their efforts to detecting and monitoring illicit trafficking.[55]

The financial importance comes into play to aid for the support the USSOF provides to military units in this region, delivered by U.S. Southern Command, being the combatant command responsible for U.S. military operations in Latin America, and at the same time SOCSOUTH directing and monitoring SOF activities in this region as the Theater Special Operations Command. Although not specified to the amount of financial assistance that goes to Guatemala specifically, Fig 4 shows the financial assistance

[55] Adam Isacson and Sarah Kinosian, "Which Central American Military and Police Units Get the Most U.S. Aid?" *WOLA*, April 15, 2016, 1, accessed February 15, 2017, https://www.wola.org/analysis/which-central-american-military-and-police-units-get-the-most-u-s-aid/.

provided by DoD to Central America between 2010 and 2016, and projected numbers for 2017.

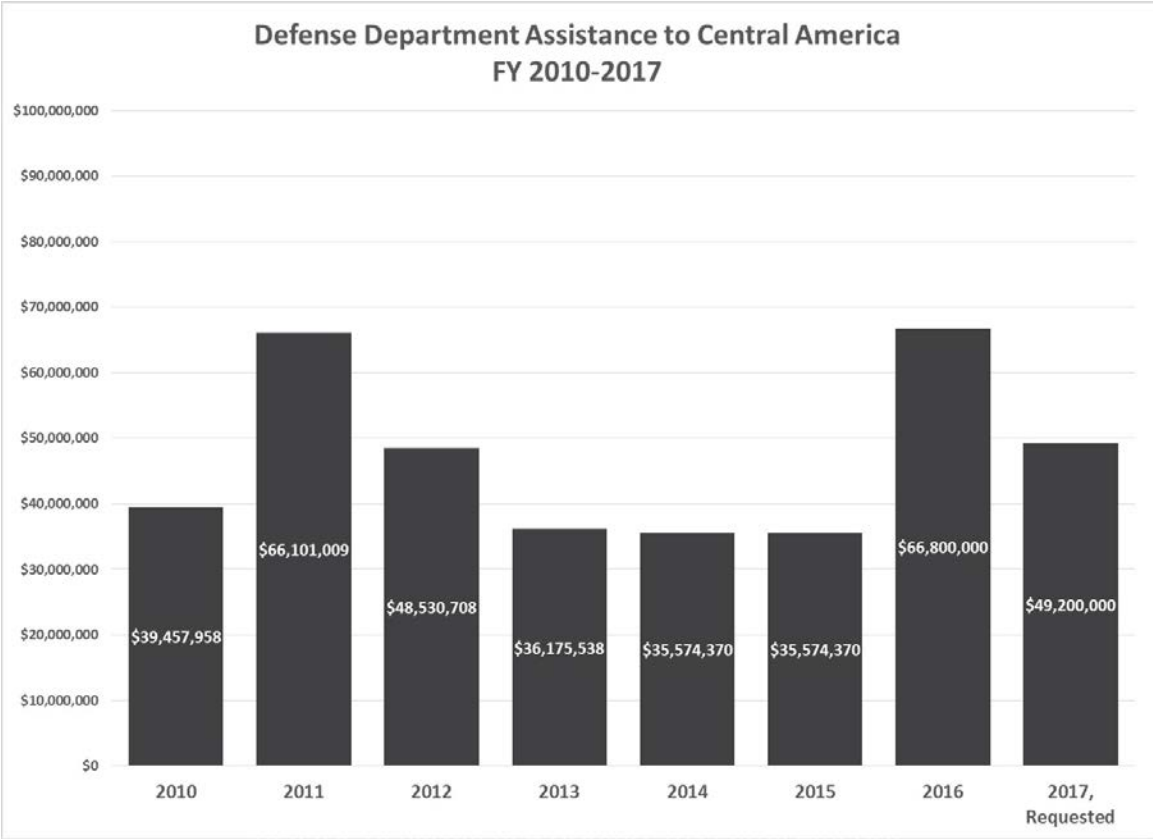

Figure 4. DoD Assistance to Central America FY 2010-2017

Source: Washington Office on Latin America, "Which Central American Military and Police Unites Get the Most US Aid," April 15, 2016, accessed February 15, 2017, https://www.wola.org/analysis/which-central-american-military-and-police-units-get-the-most-u-s-aid/.

The timeline covered in the above referenced chart demonstrates through financial figures, the valid interest from the U.S. to support central america to fighting transnational crime. Notoriously, the U.S. works within Guatemala with Interagency Task Force Tecún Umán (IATF-Tecun Uman), a unit that was established in July 2013 for the

purpose of drug interdiction flowing across Mexico southern border. This unit is identified as one of the top priorities of the U.S. Army South as it has been assisted among several security agencies by other organizations supported by the U.S. government, in training members of this task force.[56] The Kaibiles benefit from this situation as they maintain a steady relationship with U.S. Special Operations Units.[57] In addition, there are other Guatemalan operational groups that are also assisted by U.S. funded programs. One of those units is the GEIR, mostly composed of Kaibiles, having an important mission oriented to neutralizing, and preventing any narcoterrorism threat to the country. They work together with the U.S. Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) very closely, to develop further readiness of this unit.

The resources invested by the U.S., State and Defense Departments, provide critical support to Guatemala in building their capacity to protect unsecured borders, continue establishing a fighting force capable of restricting the advance from criminals into this nation. The employment of USSOF towards supporting the U.S. security strategy in Central America comes at a cost, with short and long term commitments from U.S. partners being in a constant review and improvement of programs to deal more efficiently with problems that affect Guatemala in the worst manner as narco-traffic being ranking among the top.

U.S. priorities in terms of building partner capacity and security of the region, generate directly from feedback and lessons learned from entities and military units who

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

have interaction with U.S. partners abroad. Therefore, it facilitates the U.S. getting to know where the major efforts to boost partner capacity need to be emphazised in. Proper employment of forces for these objectives, comes from having an understanding of the environment, the currently existing problems and threats that affect that environment, along with force strength and level of preparation to face an enemy that is diversed and asymmetric.

Building partner capacity reaches far beyond unity, surpassing the concept of simply providing assistance to a foreign force whether financially or materially oriented, which requires the commitment from both partners in a way the beneficiary force can ultimately defend itself from a known threat**,** and if the situation calls for it, the same effort can be conducted alongside U.S. forces. It is the mentality that must exist with allies in order to maximize effectivenes vs creating dependency of those who adhere to a norm of this nature throughout a long term relationship on a preferencial scale.

For the area of interest being investigated, Guatemala is precisely aligning with the national strategy for security efforts with the U.S., but it is necessary to instill the need to start an initiative that will benefit the way Guatemala develops in a cooperative manner, incorporatingn of its vision towards attaining the desired endstate in terms of building its operational capacity.

As the combatant command, USSOUTHCOM is the main proponent to provide support to this concept, along with the participation of influential entities as the State Department are organic to the construction of lasting relationships among partners within the Western Hemisphere specifically in the area of Central America. In 2010, important figures have made notorious contributions in regards of expanding the definition of BPC.

Former secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, has been a contributor to the projection of the definition for building capacity. The importance of the term BPC transcends the barrier of usual needs to be considered as an accessory to define the level of difficulty to achieve a purpose of partnership.[58]

Levels of Corruption

Guatemala is not excluded from corruption when it comes to matters about narco-traffic. This is an aspect that must be closely considered when analyzing this problem.[59] This investigation focuses on the supporting evidence and information, obtained from studies that are associated to military matters accounts, which reaveal in one way or another the existence of corruption. However, the need to expose some points of view that relate to the political or more so, the Diplomatic instrument, serve as a viable platform to elaborate ideas that help the author to generate a valid argument in the topic of investigation.

Humanity continues to demnostrate that corruption is present at all levels, even within a legitimate government, without specific distinction of who conducts the act whether of high or low hierarchy.[60] Having a good understanding of the values of the homeland, the will to maintain integrity and the right attitude to treat this problem from

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[58] Anthony Heisler, *By, with and through: The Theory and Practice of Special Operations Capacity-Building* (Monterey, CA: Calhoun, 2014), 44.

[59] Adriana Ángel, *Rethorical Construction of Corruption* (Quito, EC: Chasqui Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación, 2016), 11, accessed April 28, 2017, http://web.b.ebscohost.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=91d041b7-5560-40ef-bdf9-f0302d53fe87%40sessionmgr104&hid=115.

[60] Transparency International, "Guatemala," 2016, accessed April 28, 2017, https://www.transparency.org/country/GTM.

the root, it takes personal and professional courage to accept that not always there will be a perfect environment free of corruption.

Thanks to the existence of organizations like CICIG (International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala), an organization that was created in April of 2015 by the United Nations,[61] the knowledge about corrupt activities within the Guatemalan governement, it turned out to be or serve as an eye opener to the international community, through formal accussations made to political and police officials. This entity, has made known more than 60,000 recordings involving important guatemalan government figures.[62]

Corruption can be structured in a hierarchical manner like any organization, and it can range from higher to lower level echelons within a government. Depending on the level of corruption, the actors and the organizations involved, its exactly what determines the level of effort that involves to solve this problem. Additionally, these type of situations can affect the military conglomerate, whether for integrity, functionality and legal matters among other factors. Due to this construct and through investigating, the author has found that crime and government corruption together place Guatemala in a vulnerable and questionable position, that identifies the country as a contributor to catapult narco-terrorism.[63]

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[61] Ángel, *Rethorical Construction of Corruption*, 3.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Taft-Morales, "Guatemala: Political, Security," 6.

The different descriptions about corruption whether black for highest level, or white as for lower level,[64] gravitate to one thing in common, which indicates the effects created by this anomaly since earlier times to present, expected to be dimnished throughout time, but contrary of that, continue increasing.

Although corruption can be considered as a main problem in most societies, it is often overlooked from the academic aspect, and rarely countered from the political aspect.[65]

As long as leaders remain in the periferal view of the public eye as questionable figures who lack integrity, Guatemala will stay stagnet. This will only contribute to establishing ideal conditions to a vicious cycle, involving instability within a legitimate government. The terms corruption and narco-terrorism in Guatemala should not be equivalent to an assumed or perceived existing relatioship between the two. However, the author assumes that corruption is an integral element for subsistence to crime organizations within Guatemala. As cruel as it may seem, it is a cruel reality that exists throughtout different internal aspects within the Guatemalan governement in areas such as public services, judicial system, police departments, land and tax administration, customs administration, legislation, natural resources and perhaps the most delicate which is civil society.[66]

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] GAN Business Anti-Corruption Portal "Guatemala Corruption Report," August, 2016, accessed March 14, 2017, http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/guatemala.

Sustainability

The U.S. military will continue its involvement with internal security matters in Guatemala, as this country is perhaps the most important within the "Northern Triangle" region, due to its geographical location as mentioned in earlier chapters, and graphically depicted in figure 5.

As a result of some drug traffic organizations moving their operations into Guatemalan territory, and operating across borders, this has forced the country to adopt aggressive tactics, succeeding their police forces with military forces.[67] Including partners and providing them leverage to exercise influence and initiative in their own sovereign soil, enables them with the ability to establish and expand upon necessary conditions, that help defining priorities in terms of security and stability that are specific to the region of Central America, specifically to Guatemala.

This is a process that when conducted in a systematic manner, it shows partners that there is hope in maintaining efforts to counter crime, corruption, narco-traffic, human traffic and terrorism as well. This is the type of effort that ensures major advisors and contributors to peace efforts continue its involvement in the process as it is the State Department, Department of Defense and the Combatant Command USSOUTHCOM in parallel with the Theater Special Operations Command SOCSOUTH.

Different than when President George H. W. Bush removed military aid to Guatemala in 1990, due to human rights and misapplications conducted by Guatemalan security forces, U.S. Congress placed conditions about providing aid to Guatemala in FY

[67] Taft-Morales, "Guatemala: Political, Security," 15.

2014. These sanctions have regulated the way Guatemala receives or not, the necessary assistance from the U.S. to ultimately strenghten its military force.[68]

The way a provision affects the flow for military assistance from the U.S. to Guatemala, is that it creates a a condition that limits addressing or treating other problems within the country, therefore taking away from the required attention to other points of interest such as security and stability of the nation. Because of this reason, President Perez Molina Administration, insisted to the U.S. to lift this restrictions or drop this sanctions in order to refocus more on the military aid to the Army.[69] This action woud enable the right priorities going to the right areas, considering that the military factor has relevant influence in the shaping of the security structure of Guatemala.

A proposal for a revision of drug policies in 2014 from Perez Molina, responds to the current situation in Guatemala, where violence and drug trafficking continue to be an influencing factor to destabilization within that region. His cooperation with the U.S. on counter–narcotic endeavors, and the prosecution of criminal cases, strengthens the pathway between the U.S. and Guatemala to come together and establish continuity through programs like CARSI, which have strengthen Guatemalan governemnt capacity to increase the number of drug seizures in that area. These efforts demonstrate that Guatemalan government is willing to keep fighting against transnational crime.

In an effort to keep a lasting and effective counter narcoterrorism initiative along with the U.S., Guatemala will only be successful only if its government implements law

[68] Ibid., 19.

[69] Ibid., 20.

enforcement adequately in conjunction with the professionalization of the judicial process. This will allow the legal aspect of matters to improve and gain the necessary momentum to defend the nation, following a path to become prosperous.

Figure 5. The Northern Triangle

Source: David Wroe, "'Northern Triangle' of death: Australia-bound refugees fleeing a brutal gang conflict," *Sidney Morning Herald*, September 21, 2016, accessed April 1, 2017, http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/northern-triangle-of-death-australiabound-refugees-fleeing-a-brutal-gang-conflict-20160921-grl9x3.html.

Legalities and Authorities

Regarding legal procedures and formal law, Guatemala has some cleaning to do in relation to a past of constant corruption.[70] This anomaly continues sending a message to the world community about the need for Guatemala to work more in depth in their governmental and judicial system. In a good perspective, Guatemala still shows desire to continue moving forward, as it shows in the June 2003 agreement concerning cooperation to suppress illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances by sea and air, with twenty-one articles it details the responsibilities the government of Guatemala is bound to abide by as this documents entails a vast amount of legal content pertinent to enforce severer laws against drug traffic. The concern about this agreement is that any party, whether the U.S. or Guatemala, could terminate the agreement at any time upon a written notification to the other party through the appropriate diplomatic channel, and shall take effect six months from the date of notification.[71]

As a major step, this as other legal matters that Guatemala handles with the U.S. leaves a rope pending, whether this type of legal action indeed helps or deters the capacity of Guatemala to be able to manage complex matters by themselves when it comes to narco-traffic. Corruption seems to deteriorate any gains that could be made by the government of Guatemala as the U.S. still tries to let them make improvements in its

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[70] BBC News, "Guatemala profile - Timeline," *BBC News*, January 3, 2017, accessed April 29, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19636725.

[71] U.S. Government, *Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Guatemala Concerning Cooperation to Suppress Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances by Sea and Air1*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government, June 19, 2003), 17.

law procedures and organization through training selected personnel, and providing adequate operational support.[72] U.S. support rule-of-law activities are allowing Guatemala to continue to increase its capacity to prosecute narcotic traffickers, organized crime leaders, and corrupt officials. The seized asset law, is an efficient method for denying drug traffickers of conducting illegal activities, and provides the necessary resources to law enforcement and the justice sector.[73]

Guatemala contributes to national security with the existence of the Special Naval Force (FEN) first established in 2008, becoming fully operational in 2009.[74] This asset contributes significantly to the number of maritime interdictions conducted in the past few years that have stopped more than 12,500 kg of cocaine from reaching its destinations at an estimated value of U.S. $160 million dollars.[75]

By mentioning the accomplishments made by this Guatemalan unit, the author visualizes that efforts from Guatemala are still sincere and authentic, oriented to maintain security and stability within the Central American region. Furthermore, Guatemala continues to work hand and hand with the U.S., as it was expressed in 19th May 2015 by

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[72] U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (2014), 183, accessed April 1, 2017, https://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2014/vol1/222894.htm.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Juan Garrido, "Trasiego de droga en un 80% pasa por el océano Pacífico," *SIGLO.21*, March 20, 2017, accessed April 2, 2017, http://www.s21.gt/2017/03/trasiego-droga-en-80-pasa-oceano-pacifico/.

[75] Sandra Osorio, "Fuerzas Especiales Navales combaten el tráfico de drogas en Guatemala," *Diálogo*, May 8, 2015, accessed April 2, 2017, https://dialogo-americas.com /es/articles/fuerzas-especiales-navales-combaten-el-trafico-de-drogas-en-guatemala.

U.S. Marine General John Kelly[76]: "A country as Guatemala, who possesses a relatively small naval force, but by utilizing the intelligence provided by USSOUTHCOM, it goes and conducts interdictions even with limited supplies of fuel, do not fear going out to do their job. Because of this, it is in my best interest to support a force like this one".[77] These counter-narcotic cooperation efforts between U.S. and Guatemala help to maintain the U.S. at a level of ease, from an awareness perspective, although narco-traffic is the number one contributor to the extensive drug problem use that occurs in the U.S. being the major drug consumer within the hemisphere.

Guatemala has suffered the backlashes of applied embargoes from the U.S. for nearly three decades due to human rights discrepancies as well as corruption. These issues still loiter within the political and military panorama of the relationships between the U.S. and Guatemala. This is relevant regarding CNT, as well as to the Kaibiles for the matters of human rights under the legal aspect of things.[78] This human rights element, has been fundamental in the developmental part of the Kaibiles, considering that this specialized unit has endured a criticized past.[79] The same history that has placed them in a questionable position of integrity due to accusations from international organizations made to the Guatemalan military about war crimes, but despite this fact, the Kaibiles are

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[76] I. Cifuentes, "Fuerza Especial Naval de Guatemala FEN," Perspectiva Militar, May 26, 2015, accessed April 2, 2017, http://perspectivamilitar.blogspot.com/2015/05/fuerza-especial-naval-de-guatemala-fen.html?m=1.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Security Assistance Monitor "Facts about Guatemala's Kaibiles," Security Assistance Monitor, January 18, 2013, accessed April 30, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/blog/facts-about-guatemalas-kaibiles.

[79] Taft-Morales, "Guatemala: Political, Security," 6.

still the prime example of a prepared force within the Guatemalan army. They are ready to execute the mission at any given time, maintaining a standard of excellence as one of the most equipped, organized and specialized units in Guatemala and the Western Hemisphere.[80]

Organizations in Guatemala, that are responsible for enforcing human rights, point out the use of the called "*judicial remedies"* by the defense lawyers of military personnel accused of these crimes to paralyze criminal proceedings against them most through the Injunctive Relief Law (*Ley de Amparo*).[81] This legal method is utilized in a civil lawsuit, in addition to, or in place of, monetary damages. This relief law is worth mentioning because rather than offering money as payment for a wrong in a civil action, injunctive relief is a court order for the defendants to stop a specified act or behavior.[82]

This type of negative publicity affects the image of the military sector in Guatemala, and it does not contribute positively in the foundational process in which the military builds their credibility principles upon. This type of attention related to corruption does indeed darken the image and integrity of the military forces in Guatemala. However, regardless of this existing concern about accusations of involvement of the military in organized crime, there is still U.S. funding through the

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[80] Equite, "Guatemalan Kaibiles," 1.

[81] Guatemalan Human Rights Commission, "GHRC and Partners Reaffirm Importance of Current Military Ban to Guatemala: Current Concerns regarding the Guatemalan Army," May 2012, accessed April 3, 2017, http://www.ghrc-usa.org/resources/press-room/ghrc-and-partners-reaffirm-importance-of-current-military-ban-to-guatemala/.

[82] Legal Dictionary s.v. "Injunctive Relief," accessed April 3, 2017, https://legaldictionary.net/injunctive-relief/.

Department of Defense being utilized for training and support of Guatemalan soldiers including the Kaibiles.[83] Although it may seem controversial, U.S. financial assistance is one portion of the evolution that exponentially increases the efficiency of partner forces to continue building capacity. It further reaffirms that the military structure, is necessary in Guatemala and must remain in optimal preparation to offer security and stability as the author stresses on this investigation, although some non-governmental organizations believe that national security matters in Guatemala are a responsibility that should be handled primarily by the judicial sector.[84]

Risk to Human Rights

Guatemalan military forces remain under heavy scrutiny from various non-governmental entities within the human rights community. These organizations or defending groups as defined by the author, protect human rights on its totality, as well as peace and justice.[85] Because Guatemala bears an obscure past related to corruption, and discrepancies associated with human rights, it constantly draws the attention of Non-governmental entities as WOLA, being a big advocate regarding enforcing peace and justice as part of their agenda. It is imperative to highlight the role played by some of the human rights organizations as they follow closely the way the military forces are developed, not only in Guatemala, but at the global level as well.

[83] Ibid.

[84] WOLA, "International Commission Against."

[85] Ibid.

The human rights subject not to taken lightly, as it affects the way an institution or any organization in our modern–day society can be perceived when dealing with others, based on moral and ethical issues. Just like the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission (GHRC), founded in 1982 by Sister Alice Zachmann, in reaction to the internal armed conflict that was taking place in Guatemala around that time.[86] Acts of torture, kidnapping, mass displacement, and fear, were the common theme during this armed conflict along with the number of human rights violations increase. The non-profit status or nature of this organization elevates its capacity to catch the attention of the public when voicing its opinion while educating the international community as an advocate for policies that foster peace and justice.[87] Ultimately, the Guatemalan military has made significant progress in projecting the image of a professional institution, which promotes supporting and development of quality of life and security for the people of Guatemala. Also, the Guatemalan Army through the Department of Human Rights, promotes the execution and validity of the basic rights inherent to a person, but more important the continuous improvement of levels of quality of life for its members.[88]

To further guarantee security for the populace, the military force must project confidence and competency, as well as be able to performance to a standard of excellence that can be measured in both quantitative and a qualitative manner. Therefore, becoming

[86] Guatemala Human Rights Commission "History and Timeline," 2011, accessed April 05, 2017, http://www.ghrc-usa.org/about/history/.

[87] Guatemala Human Rights Commission, "Mission, Vision, and Values."

[88] Guatemala Human Rights Commission, "Visión del Ejército," 2016, accessed April 5, 2017, http://www.mindef.mil.gt/nuestroejercito/nuestroejercito_vision.html.

tangible and evident, to the populace who is always expecting a service of protection. Human Rights are fundamentally unavoidable as our nowadays society pays more attention, or better yet has more access to information in a faster manner than it used to occur not too long ago. Considering that when information is used, it influences, and because of that very reason, it could potentially become a double edge sword about risk to Human Rights. Is that moment when a nation establishes legality protocols that correlates with sets of rules which define a framework of authenticity, serving more as a regulating entity rather than a rigid control measure. At this point the author recognizes the important connection and relationship that exist between laws and rights in relation to the research topic, to later issue recommendations based on the findings made during this investigation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

CNT is a program mentioned in a smaller proportion, compared to other State Department programs focused on counter narco–traffic and terrorism separately. This topic has provided the author an opportunity to project through this investigation, a small but significant contribution. An opportunity to define and specify what CNT is designed to do and the effects it creates regarding the grueling fight against narco–terrorism. The program is virtually applicable in more than one geographical area in the world, but in this thesis the author highlights the effects that the program has produced in the Central America Area, more specifically in Guatemala. CNT in general, will only work by not just having an active participation and unilateral efforts conducted by the U.S., although it is a program owned by the U.S., there must be an active involvement from the partner nation to ensure the program is serving the right purpose towards meeting future goals to accomplish security and stability.

In this case, Guatemala must continue aiming to maintain a security oriented posture, in response to the support provided by the U.S. Tailored not only from a beneficial stand point, but from the position of helping to build a foundation to further develop a model to other nations in Central America. Grasping the essence of this concept will assist Guatemala greatly to capture, analyze, and perhaps set the example for other nations within the Central American region to follow in the realm of establishing security and stability.

At the strategic level, the author distinguishes that a sense of pertinence in this complex environment related to national security, governance and diplomacy, could complement the position of the military power in this situation. It is indeed necessary for the political sector in Guatemala to maintain that initiative, since the military has proven effectiveness in what they do with the available forces they have.[89] In retrospective, the Kaibiles have earned a reputation of being an effective unit, able to accomplish the mission, often called upon to defend the countryside, maintaining credibility and firmness to continue projecting strength and aggressiveness so necessary to fight the drug cartels. These soldiers are a pure representation of the courage of their ancestors and the homeland, working diligently to honor and protect Guatemala.[90]

Responding to the primary research question for this thesis, Has the CNT been effective in developing the capabilities of the Kaibiles to fight narco trafficking in Guatemala? The response is yes, this effectiveness is measured based on continuous application of techniques, tactics and procedures and future views to keep renovating these steps, therefore increasing the probability to continue succeeding as an interdiction force that has earned a prestige for its effectiveness and reliability. However, there are

[89] Global Fire Power, "Guatemala Military Strength: Current Military Capabilities and Available Firepower for 2016 Detailed," *Global Fire Power*, 2016, accessed April 16, 2017, http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=guatemala.

[90] Diálogo, "Kaibiles: Elite Forces Trained for Preserving - and Willing to Preserve - Peace," *Diálogo*, April 30, 2013, accessed April 3, 2017, https://dialogo-americas.com/en/articles/kaibiles-elite-forces-trained-preserving-and-willing-preserve-peace.

questions that must be answered to have a better understanding about how much the Kaibiles have accomplished because of CNT.

1. What capabilities have the Kaibiles been trained on? Looking in depth to the type of training they conduct, the capabilities the Kaibiles have been trained on, are oriented towards what can be considered their core activities in jungle warfare tactics, and counter-insurgency operations as this was discussed in chapter 3, refining their proficiency on interdiction and rescue as these are primary aspects in their operational development as an elite specialized unit.
2. What common interests are shared between the U.S. and Guatemala against narco traffic and what contributions or assistance is the U.S. helping Guatemala with?

The commonality between the U.S. and Guatemala is substantially significant, ranging from combating money laundering, corruption, narcotics trafficking, and other transnational crimes.[91] These interests surface linked to the support that the peace accords of 1996 receive from the U.S., being that partner of excellence. As far as type of contributions from the U.S. regarding Guatemala, utilizing the year 1997 as reference, U.S. contributes by having committed over $400 million to support peace implementation.[92] So, in the end, the interests shared, reflect that relations between the U.S. and Guatemala have usually been close. Leading to highlight the active participation

[91] U.S. Department of State Background Note, "Guatemala" (conference, Infoplease, Washington, DC, October 2015), https://www.infoplease.com/world/countries-world/profiles/guatemala.

[92] Ibid.

from the U.S. in support of helping Guatemala to continue developing and refining its ends ways and means to address and solve narco traffic, as more than a concern, a critical problem that not only affects Guatemala but the U.S. as well, being on the receiving end of that shockwave. And finally, consciousness must be maintained in this type of framework, where partners assist each other especially in times of need, where positive effects are expected in order to define success.

Recommendations

First Recommendation–Renovate the image

The greatest challenge for the Government of Guatemala is to clean up its image in front of the international community in matters related to human rights and corruption as well. Guatemala can achieve this objective because it has the disposition of a very competent military force, which have worked well with the U.S. and the Department of Defense throughout different exercises and combined efforts. This is an indicator about the desire and initiative from Guatemala to maintain good working relationships with the U.S. and it must be preserved as it will only yield the progress to continue solidifying a magnificent partnership oriented to achieve key objectives at the operational and strategic levels to defeat crime and narco traffic.

Second Recommendation–Continue Building Partner Capacity

As it has been shown throughout this investigation, the military forces in Guatemala, and more specifically referring to the Kaibiles, have the ability and potential to continue demonstrating their capacity and efficiency of being a specialized interdiction force. While training together with the different elements provided by USSOF, with

USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH being the Combatant Command and Theater Special Operations Command respectively for this area of the world.[93] The work ahead is significant, given that is emphasized in supporting one sub–regional initiative to improve citizen safety – this being the CARSI, as one of the main initiative that takes place in this region. As for SOCOM interaction with Guatemalan Special Forces, in coordination with SOCSOUTH, it has indeed taken part in training and operations in country through the Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) and Joint Task Force – Bravo (JTF-B). These are the actual indicators that BPC efforts are not conducted in vain, but just the opposite, they are producing good results as U.S. Special Forces have trained the Kaibiles on skills that are needed to defeat DTOs.

Third Recommendation–Continuity of CNT in Guatemala

By relevance of authorities as per Department of Defense, CNT can be exercised in Guatemala as it forms part of the Regional Objective 10, been specified in the Department of Defense Counternarcotics and Global Threats Strategy of April 2011. The objective recites that by 2015 with existing funding, to have the mission to disrupt the nexus between illicit drugs and foreign terrorist organizations that operate in and from South and Central America.[94] Objective 11, supports deployment of technologies helping the whole-of -government approach, for disruption and degrading the national security

[93] USSOCOM, "USSOCOM – U.S. Involvement in Guatemala for Counter-Narcotics Operations vs. DTOs," Opener Media, October 11, 2012, accessed April 5, 2017, https://openermedia.blogspot.com/2014/09/ussocom-us-involvement-in-guatemala-for.html#!/2014/09/ussocom-us-involvement-in-guatemala-for.htm.

[94] Department of Defense, *Counternarcotics and Global Threats Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 19.

threats posed by transnational organized crime, narcotics traffickers' threat finance networks and piracy.[95] These objectives align with NDAA section 1004 interests mentioned in chapter two of this thesis.

Fourth Recommendation–Renovation of Human Rights

Important lessons are learned throughout the history of a country, which enables present and future generations to create a sense of consciousness about things that might have not been done correctly. Because Guatemala is still under the microscope in terms of issues related to Human Rights, the fact that modern society, and technology serve as a promoter that conceptually motivates masses to be more informed at a faster capacity, an aptitude that helps breaks away from older models in which the population remains trapped in a world of limitations when it comes to information.

Human rights organizations, continue to promote justice and equality for humanity, as an effort to preserve the principles that weigh heavily in supporting the essence of their concept. These organizations, are more dynamic, equipped with knowledge and highly competent personnel, with a desire to protect those oppressed, always ready to support what is correct, morally and ethically.

Closing

The U.S. and Guatemala have fought extensively in the war against narco-terrorism and transnational crime, and will continue doing so. These efforts are not to be looked as vain, because the mission does not stop, and depends solely on the initiative,

[95] Ibid.

influence and current policies to maintain this way of protection live and well to achieve the goal to have a secure Western Hemisphere.

Future Recommendations

In order to expand the reach of this research topic, the author recommends focusing on the National Defense Authorization Act Section 1004 FY 1991, and current editions of the National Security Strategy and National Military Strategy. These documents hold relevant data about the topic of investigation. This information can help determining the effectiveness of the Counter–Narco–Terrorism program in a different perspective from the author, allowing other investigators to complete a well–intentioned project of investigation.

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